

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 MC-02 ACDA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3846

SECDEF WASH DC

CSAF WASH DC

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

AFSC ANDREWS AFB MD

ASD WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB OH

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS COPENHAGEN 0324

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: POL, MILI, DA

SUBJECT: DANISH PRESS AND THE F-16

SUMMARY: TWO DANISH NEWSPAPERS, DRAWING FROM A LONDON GUARDIAN ARTICLE PUBLISHED SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, RELATE THE SUBSTANCE OF DANISH MINISTER OF DEFENSE ORLA MOELLER'S MEETING IN BRUSSELS JANUARY 17 WITH OTHER F-16 PARTICIPANTS, AND TIE THE F-16 TO CURRENT DEFENSE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS IN DENMARK. END SUMMARY.

1. JYLLANDS POSTEN (INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE), SUNDAY, JANUARY 10, AND POLITIKEN (LEFT OF CENTER) JANUARY 11, CARRY REPORTS OF DANISH MINISTER OF DEFENSE ORLA MOELLER'S MEETING IN BRUSSELS, MONDAY, JANUARY 11, WITH MINISTERS OF DEFENSE FROM NORWAY, BELGIUM, AND HOLLAND TO DISCUSS UNCLASSIFIED

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THE F-16. THE POLITIKEN ARTICLE APPARENTLY DRAWS ITS COMMENTS FROM A SIMILAR STORY PUBLISHED SATURDAY IN LONDON'S GUARDIAN.

2. THE GUARDIAN ARTICLE, WRITTEN BY DAVID HAWORTH FROM BRUSSELS, STATES THAT "THE PROPOSED PURCHASE BY DENMARK, NORWAY, HOLLAND, AND BELGIUM OF THE LIGHTWEIGHT U.S. F-16

FIGHTER, BILLED LAST YEAR AS THE 'ARMS SALE OF THE CENTURY' WILL BE CALLED INTO QUESTION AT A SPECIAL MEETING ON MONDAY OF THE DEFENSE MINISTERS OF THESE COUNTRIES, TO BE HELD AT NATO HEADQUARTERS HERE. THE TALKS HAVE BEEN CALLED BY THE DANISH MINISTER, MR. ORLA MOELLER, WHO IS SAID TO BE GRAVELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE INCREASING COST OF THE FIGHER. DANISH OFFICIALS SAY THE COSTS ARE ESCALATING AT AN UNACCEPTABLE RATE AND THAT THE U.S. PROMISES OF CO-PRODUCTION POSSIBILITIES BY THE CUSTOMER NATIONS ARE NOT AS GENEROUS AS THEY WERE SAID TO BE WHEN THE DEAL WAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE LAST YEAR."

3. THE GUARDIAN ARTICLE FURTHER STATES THAT "BEFORE THAT THE PRESSURE ON THE FOUR NATO CAPITALS BY THE AMERICANS WAS INTENSE. THE COUNTRIES WERE ASSURED OF EASY CREDIT AND TOLD THAT A LARGE PART OF THE FIGHTERS' PRODUCTION WOULD BE IN EUROPE TO PREVENT LOCAL UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY. MR. MOELLER IS TO ASK HIS MINISTERIAL COLLEAGUES WHETHER THEY AGREE ASPECTS OF THE DEAL SHOULD BE RENEGOTIATED OR VEN IF THEY SHOULD CANCEL THE AGREEMENT."

4. THE GUARDIAN ARTICLE CONCLUDES BY STATING "NATO SOURCES BELIEVE THAT THE DANISH FEARS ARE NOT SHARED BY THE OTHER POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS. NEIGHTER BELGIUM NOR NORWAY HAS EXPRESSED ANY ANXIETIES ABOUT THE WISDOM OF CONCLUDING THE DEAL. NOR HAS THE NETHERLANDS SO FAR, THOUGH THE DUTCH FACE A GENERAL ELECTION SOON AND SOME DEFENSE EXPERTS IN THE HAGUE ARE NOT CONFIDEENT ABOUT UNCLASSIFIED

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HOW THEY WOULD USE THE AIRCRAFT STRATEGICALLY."

5. SUNDAY'S POLITIKEN CARRIED A VERY SHORT ARTICLE ON PAGE SIX WHICH STATES THAT "THE MEETING IS TAKING PLACE ON THE INITIATIVE OF DEFENSE MINISTER ORLA MOELLER WHO IS BELIEVED TO BE DEEPLY WORRIED BECAUSE THE PLANES HAVE BECOME FAR MORE EXPENSIVE THAN EXPECTED, STATES THE BRITISH PAPER THE GUARDIAN." POLITIKEN THEN CITES THE GUARDIAN ARTICLE INCORRECTLY, SAYING THAT DANISH SOURCES HAVE STATED, BECAUSE OF INFLATION, THE AIRPLANES WILL BE 10 PERCENT MORE EXPENSIVE THAN EXPECTED. (COMMENT: THE GUARDIAN ARTICLE DOES NOT CARRY A STATEMENT BY DANISH SOURCES NOR DOES IT CONTAIN A REFERENCE TO THE AMOUNT OF PRICE ESCALATION. END COMMENT).

6. JYLLANDS POSTEN, MONDAY, JANUARY 17, IN A PAGE-TWO ARTICLE, TIES THE BRUSSELS MEETING INDIRECTLY TO THE PRESENT DANISH DEFENSE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS BY REPORTING THAT "THE RADICAL PARTY'S JENS BILGRAV NIELSEN CALLED ON

THE DANISH GOVERNMENT TO MAKE CLEAR ITS STATUS IN RELATION TO WHAT HAS BEEN CALLED THE 'WEAPONS DEAL OF THE CENTURY' BEFORE IT ENTERS INTO A DEFENSE AGREEMENT." THE PAPER QUOTES MINISTER OF DEFENSE MOELLER AS STATING THAT THE BRUSSELS MEETING "CONCERNS PRICES, IT CONCERNS THAT PORTION OF THE PLANES WHICH IS TO BE BUILT IN DENMARK, AND IT CONCERNS THE DISTRIBUTION TO DATE OF CONTRACTS AMONG THE FOUR COUNTRIES AND THE AMERICAN FIRMS WHICH ARE INVOLVED IN THE DEAL."

7. THE ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT "ON SUNDAY, RITZAUS BUREAU (DANISH PRESS SERVICE) TRIED TO GET AN EXPLANATION FOR THE MEETING BUT THE OUTCOME OF THE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE NORWEGIAN, BELGIAN AND NETHERLANDS DEFENSE MINISTERS WAS THAT THEY WOULD WAIT TO HEAR WHAT ORLA MOELLER HAD TO SAY." DEAN

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Message Attributes

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